DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 184 346 **FL 011 146**

AUTHOR	Pack, Alice C., Ed.
TITLE	TESL Reporter, Vol. 4, No. 1.
INSTITUTION	Brigham Young Univ., Laie, Hawaii. Div. of Communication and Language Arts.
PUB DATE	70
NOTE	13p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Communication and Language Arts Division, Brigham Young University, Hawaii Campus, Laie, Oahu, HI 96762 (free)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	English; *English (Second Language); *Form Classes (Languages); Grammar; *Language Acquisition; *Nonstandard Dialects; Second Language Instruction; *Second Language Learning; *Sentence Structure

ABSTRACT

This issue of "TESL Reporter" presents the following articles: "Language Acquisition and Dialectalism" by Patricia G. Adkins, "Supplementation of Opposites in Simple Predicate Expansion" by Yao Shen, and "Form Class Baseball: A TESL Game" by Alice C. Pack. The meaning today of dialectal speech, or "bidialectal speech," is addressed by Patricia Adkins, who feels that the child or adult learning English as a second language should be taught the phonology and syntax of an educated person, although she says that one dialect is not better than another. Yao Shen discusses observable grammatical word strings and grammatical formulas of three auxiliaries and two modals in the expansion of the English predicate in two relationships. The three auxiliaries are "be," "have," and "do," and the two modals are "will" and "can." This article is the first of four installments. The TESL game presented by Alice Pack is designed to help students learn the four English form classes (noun, verb, object, and adverb) and specific words and their alternate forms, and provide additional practice for students whose native languages do not have these different word forms. (SW)

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TESL REPORTER

Published by:
English Language Institute
The Church College of Hawaii

Vol. 4, No. 1 Laie, Hawaii Fall, 1970

Language Acquisition and Dialectalism

By PATRICIA G. ADKINS

We have no neat Litmus-Paper Test for the evaluation of language acquisition. We know that all children begin to speak at about the same age, regardless of the language involved. We also note that normal children have learned the basic structure of their language by the age of five or six. Houston emphasizes the common age of onset of language and the common course of language acquisition of children around the world, making the general assumption that this was due to neurological factors.[1] Many speech pathologists and psychologists accept man's inherent tendency to learn language by exposure to linguistic features. In the case of the child, this is not a matter of formal teaching, but informal listening to the phonology, morphology and syntax of the language, resulting in his "figuring out" the relationships of the sounds, forms and patterns surrounding him. In the situation in which he says "foots" for "feet," as in an analogy with "hand-hands," a simple correction by parents, peers, siblings or teacher may serve to correct the error. This would similarly be true of "bringed" for "brought" or "blowed" for "blew."

In the case of the adult learning a second language, the learning problem is different from that of the child, but it is a common problem in all language learning. Children rapidly expand their vocabularies if they are expanding in their native tongue; this is a normal procedure. The basic units are already formulated; the sounds, spelling, and pronunciation are quite similar. It is possible to increase a child's vocabulary from 1,000 words to 10,000 words by using the same familiar language rules. The sentence structure is basically the same. His "accent" will be that of his parents and playmates whom he first heard and imitated. The speech pattern of imitation which we learn when we are beginning to talk is the one which generally remains with us in adult life.

Lado says: "The adult speaker of one language cannot easily pronounce language sounds of another even though he has no speech impediment, and what is even more startling, he cannot easily hear language sounds other than those of his native language even though he suffers no hearing defect. This is one of the major problem areas confronting the bilingual student."[2]

Patricia G. Adkins, Ph. D., is Director of Education Professions Development, Region XIX Education Service Center, El Paso, Texas, and has taught ESL and Linguistics at the University of Texas for the past nine years. Her doctorate in English as a Second Language was taken at the University of Colorado.

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Time and pitch differences are likely to be a major factor, for we recognize immediately these deviations from our own speech. In addition, there are changes of word emphasis within the structural make-up of the sentence or thought. On the basis of these differences, it appears logically sound that the term "accent" fails to embody the problems evidenced by the majority of students who learn English as a second language. Grant Fairbanks suggested the term "dialectal speech."[3]

However, dialectal speech, or "bidialectal" speech has another connotation today. This term is currently utilized to describe the language of the economically disadvantaged child in the United States. It is applied to the disadvantaged black child, to the Spanish-speaking child in the Southwest, and to the culturally deprived child in any area. The speech of these children is not the so-called "standard" speech of the middle-class monolingual English speaker in this country. Baratz defines dialectal speech within a frame of reference of substandard speech learned in a language environment where standard English is not spoken.[4]

Does the bilingual speech or dialectal speech or substandard speech of such youngsters fall into the category of "defective" speech? Is this "defective speech" when it is used by an adult?

My personal feeling is that the child or adult learning English as a second language should be taught the phonology and syntax of an educated person, if only for the ultimate goal of being able to communicate with all persons with whom he will come in contact. He will appear to be uneducated if his speech reflects otherwise. Although his speech may not be considered "defective" in the sense of the word, he may be "language handicapped."

Phonology must be *taught*; morphology must be *taught*; syntax must be *taught*. The ultimate language goal of the student will determine his needs. We have no means of judging language outside of the function it serves in its own cultural environment. One dialect is not "better" than another. Our judgments are valid only within the limitation of our immediate society. How do you measure, in terms we can all understand, language proficiency?

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2. Robert Lado, Linguistics Across Cultures (Ann Arbor; Univeristy of Michigan Press, 1957), p. 11.

3. Grant Fairbanks, Voice and Articulation Drillbook (New York; Harper and Brothers, 1940), p. 226.

4. Joan C. Baratz, "Language in the Economically Disadvantaged Child: A Perspective," ASHA Journal, Vol. 10, No. 4 (April, 1968), pp. 143-145.

ELI TEXTBOOK SURVEY

Since nothing in the way of a textbook survey had been published since Dr. Harold B. Allen's very valuable TENES report (NCTE, 1966) early in 1970 approximately 1,200 questionnaires were sent to TESOL members and institutions regarding the texts they were using in teaching English to non-native speakers. A questionnaire form was also published in the TESL REPORTER.

There were 255 replies to the mailed questionnaire and two replies from the published form, plus several returned forms from those interested in the survey who were not currently teaching ESL students. Replies were segregated into Elementary, Junior High, High School, College, and Adult (non college); some schools reported on kindergarten through Garde 12 with no distinction as to where specific books were used.

Only five replies were received from countries other than the United States so the survey is essentially of books used in the United States. There were two replies from Puerto Rico, one from Tonga, and two from the Trust Territories.

The complete report will be published in the next issue of the TESL REPORTER (Winter, 1971).

Supplementation of Opposites in Simple Predicate Expansion[1]

By YAO SHEN

The subject of this article is simple predicate expansion. It discusses observable grammatical word strings and grammatical formulas of three auxiliaries and two modals in the expansion of the English predicate in two relationships. One of these relationships is external; the other internal. The external relationship is that between the subject and the predicate. The feature under consideration is within the predicate; the subject, though a member of a sentence is, nevertheless, outside the predicate.[2] The internal relationship concerns the behavior among members within the predicate. It includes formations of continuous strings and discontinuous strings with auxiliaries and modals including the verb. The three auxiliaries used are *be, have,* and *do;* and the two modals are *will,* and *can.* Details are also given regarding the behavior of *do.* The purpose here is to call attention to the supplementation of opposites between the observable and the operational. Examples are affirmative statements with simple expanded predicates that do not use words such as *and, or, not* and *here, now, immediately.* Unexpanded ones are included for contrast.

A feature which is independent of either relationship external or internal and yet must be taken up here is tense. Tense is the present/past distinction. It is a distinction in form. In English, it is indicated by the inflectional suffix of the first member in the predicate. The verb in the predicate occurs last. In an unexpanded predicate, tense is carried by the verb which is the first member and also is the last one.

present: They do
past: They did

Expanded predicates are formed by the addition of auxiliaries and modals before the verb. The longer the expanded predicate is, the farther apart the subject and the verb are. The first member in an expanded predicate is either an auxiliary or a modal. It is the first auxiliary or modal that carries tense distinction; the verb does not. In the following pairs of sentences with both unexpanded and expanded predicates, a. indicates the present tense; b. the past tense.

	subject					verb
1a.	They					do
b.	They					did
2a.	They				are	done
b.	They				were	done
3a.	They			are	being	done
b.	They			were	being	done
4a.	They		have	been	being	done
b.	They		had	been	being	done
5a.	They	will	have	been	being	done
b.	They	would	have	been	being	done

Two sets (A and B) of twelve sentences each appear below. The present and past tenses are indicated by a. and b. Set A contains unexpanded predicates: set B has expanded predicates with *be, have* and *do* as auxiliaries and *will* and *can* as modals. Both sets have *go, be, have, do, will* and *can* as their lexical verbs.

Yao Shen is Professor in the English Department at the University of Hawaii. An author of over 80 publications in nine different countries, she has also previously contributed to this magazine.

1. This is the first of four installments. I am grateful to Robert A. Peters and Elizabeth Bowman, editor and associate editor of Journal of English Linguistics, Western Washington State College, and Janet Callender of the University of Hawaii for their detailed and constructive criticisms.

2. The terms subject and predicate are used for the purpose of explanatory convenience. No offense to or defense of Chomsky's deep grammar and Fillmore's deep grammar is intended here.

Set A.		verb
A1a.	Mary goes to church	go
A2a.	Mary is funny	be
A3a.	Mary has problems	have
A4a.	Mary does the dishes	do
A5a.	Mary wills her books to her school	will
A6a.	Mary cans tomatoes	can
A1b.	Mary went to church	go
A2b.	Mary was funny	be
A3b.	Mary had problems	have
A4b.	Mary did the dishes	do
A5b.	Mary willed her books to her school	will
A6b.	Mary canned tomatoes	can

Set B.		modal	auxiliary	verb
B1a.	Mary is gone		be	go
B2a.	Mary is being funny		be	be
B3a.	Mary has had problems		have	have
B4a.	Mary does do the dishes		do	do
B5a.	Mary will will her books to her school	will		will
B6a.	Mary can can tomatoes	can		can
B1b.	Mary was gone		be	go
B2b.	Mary was being funny		be	be
B3b.	Mary had had problems		have	have
B4b.	Mary did do the dishes		do	do
B5b.	Mary would will her books to her school	will		will
B6b.	Mary could can tomatoes	can		can

The external relationship deals with the feature of subject agreement of *be, have, do, will,* and *can.*

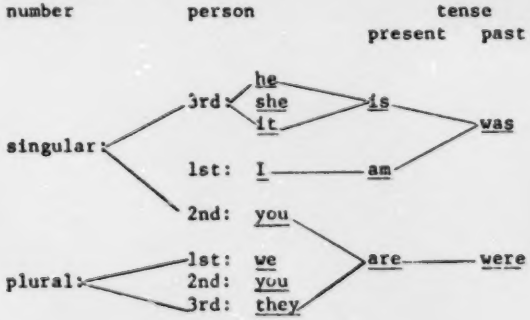
Subject agreement is most observable in *be. Was* agrees with both the first person singular and the third person singular.

Are and *were* agree with the second person in both the singular and the plural.

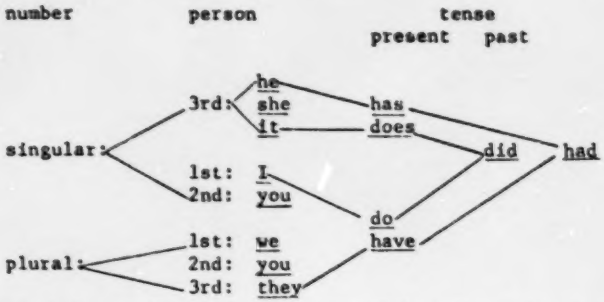
sing: You alone are working as a student
You alone were looked upon as a student

plu: You two are regarded as students
You two were going as students

Subject agreement occurs in both tenses. Present tense *is* agrees with *he, she, it;* present tense *am* agrees with *I.* Past tense *was* agrees with *he, she, it* as well as with *I.* The distribution in subject agreement with *be* is as follows.



Subject agreement distributions between *have* and *do* are the same. They are not as extensive as those with *be*.



Whether *be*, *have*, and *do* are the auxiliaries in expanded predicates (auxiliary + verb) or whether they are the verbs in unexpanded predicates (auxiliary = verb), the feature of subject agreement remains.

expanded		unexpanded
Mary is doing her work	(Is Mary doing her work?	Yes,) she is
They are done with their work	(Are they done with their work?	Yes,) they are
Mary has done her work	(Has Mary done her work?	Yes,) she has
Mary does do her work	(Does Mary do her work?	Yes,) she does
Mary was doing her work	(Was Mary doing her work?	Yes,) she was
They were done with their work	(Were they done with their work?	Yes,) they were
Mary had done her work	(Had Mary done her work?	Yes,) she had
Mary did do her work	(Did Mary do her work?	Yes,) she did

There are two sets of *be*, *have*, and *do* as verbs in the unexpanded predicates. They are the lexical = verb set and the auxiliary = verb set. Both sets observe subject agreement, and both sets have the same past forms. (See sentences A2a-A4a, A2b-A4b; B2a-B4b above.)

lexical = verb	auxiliary = verb
Mary is (funny)	Mary is (doing her work)
They are (students)	They are (done with their work)
Mary has (problems)	Mary has (done her work)
Mary does (the dishes)	Mary did (do her work)
Mary was (funny)	Mary was (doing her work)
They were (students)	They were (done with their work)
Mary had (problems)	Mary had (done her work)
Mary did (the dishes)	Mary did (do her work)

The modals *will* and *can* lack the overt -s form as the present third person singular marker.

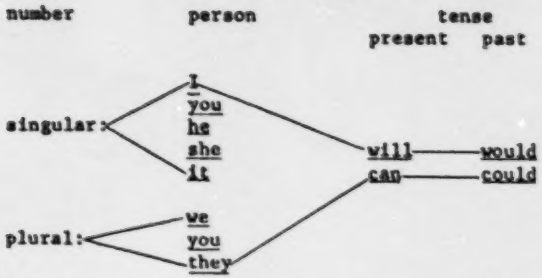
*He wills come to see you
*He cans come to see you

Modals *will* and *can* may be said to have no subject agreement. This feature can be observed in expanded predicates (modal + verb).

sing: I will enroll as a student
She will enroll as a student
You alone will enroll as a student

plu: You two will enroll as students

The lack of subject agreement is the same with *will* and *can*.



When the modals function as the verb (modal=verb) in unexpanded predicates, this absence of subject agreement remains.

(Will Mary finish her work?	Yes,) she will
(Can Mary read the newspaper?	Yes,) she can
(Would Mary do the shopping?	Yes,) she would
(Could Mary go home?	Yes,) she could

There are two sets of *will* and *can* functioning as verbs in unexpanded predicates. They are the lexical = verb set and the modal = verb set. The lexical = verb set observes subject agreement; the modal = verb set does not. The past forms of the two sets are different also. (See sentences A5a, A6a; A5b, A6b; and B5a, B6a; B5b, B6b above.)

lexical = verb	modal = verb
Mary wills (her books to her school)	Mary will (finish her work)
Mary cans (tomatoes)	Mary can (read the newspaper)
Mary willed (her books to her school)	Mary would (do the shopping)
Mary canned (tomatoes)	Mary could (go home)

Be, have, do, will, and *can* occurring in either the expanded predicate (auxiliary + verb, modal + verb) or the unexpanded predicate (auxiliary = verb, modal = verb) can be classified according to whether they observe subject agreement or not. Auxiliaries observe subject agreement; modals do not.

auxiliary + verb	modal + verb
Mary is doing her work	Mary will do her work
They are done with their work	They will do their work
Mary has done her work	Mary can do her work
Mary does do her work	They can do their work
Mary was doing her work	Mary would do her work
They were done with their work	They would do their work
Mary had done her work	Mary could do her work
Mary did do her work	They could do their work

auxiliary = verb	modal = verb
Mary is (doing her work)	Mary will (do her work)
They are (done with their work)	They will (do their work)
Mary has (done her work)	Mary can (do her work)
Mary does (do her work)	They can (do their work)
Mary was (doing her work)	Mary would (do her work)
They were (done with their work)	They would (do their work)
Mary had (done her work)	Mary could (do her work)
Mary did (do her work)	They could (do their work)

The following sentences exemplify *be, have, do, will* and *can* in the external relationship. -Ø is used after the modal to show a lack of subject agreement.

	Subject	Predicate	
be:	He	is	going
	He	was	gone
have:	He	has	gone
do:	He	does	go
will:	He	will-Ø	go
can:	He	can-Ø	go

(continued on next page)

BOOK REVIEWS

Erazmus, Edward T. and Harry J. Cargas. **English as a Second Langauge: A Reader.** Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company, 1970. 463 pp. paperback. U.S. Price $5.75

A collection of short essays and fiction by American authors from colonial times to the present. Three tables of contents are included: (1) Chronological order (the regular sequence of topics), (2) Word Count (265 to 2770 words each), and (3) Grade level of each reading (from 4th and below to 13th-15th)-length of the readings and difficulty of content are not correlated. Each reading has a short introduction giving historical background information. Following the readings are three essay topics, Vocabulary Builders (using selected words from the article), Comprehension Quizzes (multiple choice and true-false), and Structure Drills. For the structure drills students write original sentences patterned on model sentences using a frame containing specific words and/or phrases which controls syntax. Two substitutions of phrase or clause length are required in each model. An excellent book for advanced ESL students particularly for college prep courses in reading comprehension and vocabulary building.

McIntosh, Lois, Teresita V. Ramos, and Rosalina Morales Goulet. **Advancing in English.** American Book Co. New York, Manila, 1970. 278 pp. Softcover.

A comprehensive text for intermediate students with good coverage on two of the usually neglected areas. Both tag questions, which have explanations of English usage with affirmative and negative statements and tags, and disjunctive *or* questions are used in the intonation drills and explanations. However, teachers will need supplemental material on *how much* and *how many* with *be* as this is totally ignored although the coverage with *do* is adequate.

The first eight sections have a short introductory reading/listening selection or dialog with comprehension questions. Grammatical explanations of basic English sentence patterns and exercises follow. There are also writing exercises and pronunciation explanations and drills in each of these sections.

The final section "Writing in English" is a review of the basic sentences and their common transformations with a few pages devoted to writing a composition.

ALICE C. PACK

In the external relationship, *do* observes subject agreement in the way *be* and *have* do. Its behavior differs from that of *will* and *can* which do not observe subject agreement. The external relationship of *be, have, do, will,* and *can* is given below with plus (+) and minus (-) indicating the presence and absence of subject agreement.

relationship:	can	will	do	have	be
external:	-	-	+	+	+

Auxiliaries (+) and modals (-) are distinctive in their external relationship.

The internal relationship deals with expansion phenomena inside the predicate. The expansions are examined with the verb as the point of reference. The verb occurs last in an expanded predicate.

The predicate of an affirmative statement frequently has an observable verb. The verb can be the sole member in the predicate such as *They do* and *They did.* A predicate can be expanded by the addition of words, part of a word, or both. Words added can be auxiliaries and modals.

1. They go
2. They do go
3. They will go

Words added can be neither auxiliaries nor modals.

1. They travel
2. They often travel
3. They often travel extensively

Part of a word can be added to the predicate.

1. The sheep look happy
2. The sheep look-s happy
3. The sheep look-ed happy

This kind of expansion, though it is within the predicate and also with reference to the verb, is tense distinction and subject agreement. Tense distinction is independent of either relationship. Subject agreement is external relationship. A predicate can also be expanded by the addition of a word and part of a word.

1. They go
2. They are go-ing
3. They will be-Ø go-n

Predicate expansion examined here is of the last kind. It includes strings that begin with the auxiliary or the modal which has (+) or (-) subject agreement and end with the verb including all the inflectional suffixes other than those of subject agreement, which is external relationship. A string must have a minimum of two members, and strings can be continuous or discontinuous.

Continuous strings have members that occur successively, and they can be as short as two members to as long as five members, the longest string treated here.

A continuous string can have two members with the preceding one being an auxiliary (aux) and the following being the verb (V). Example sentences are

	aux	V
My heart	is	smiling
All worries	are	gone
Silence	has	fallen
Such moments	do	happen

The formula for a 2-member continuous string is *aux + V.*

In a continuous string of aux + V be, have, and do all participate forming

be + V
have + V
do + V

The following (+) indicates the occurrence of *be, have,* and *do* as the preceding member, and the verb as the following member.

preceding / following	do	have	be
V	+	+	+

A continuous string of three members can have aux + aux before the verb.

	aux	aux	V
The curtains	are	being	drawn
The dishes	have	been	done
The light	has	been	shining

The formula for a 3-member continuous string is *aux + aux + V.*

In a continuous string of three members with aux + aux before the verb, the only occurrences are

be + be
have + be

Other than these two strings, *be*, *have*, and *do* do not form any continuous strings in aux + aux before the verb. The distribution below gives their occurrences (+) and non-occurrences (-) in aux + aux + V.

preceding / following	do	have	be
do	-	-	-
have	-	-	-
be	-	+	+

Be + be (a1) and *have + be* (a2) are the two basic 2-member strings in forming longer continuous strings.

It must be remembered that though continuous string *be + be + V* occurs as aux + aux + V in the language, sentence examples with *be + be + V as part of their predicate are by no means frequent. A speculative explanation could be that be + be + V* is a recent development of Late Modern English and is now undergoing the survival test of time.[3] The same reason is perhaps also responsible for the low frequency of occurrence of sentences in the three subsequent longer formulas containing *be + be + V*. (They appear here and in the next installment.)

A continuous string can have four members with aux + aux + aux before the verb.

aux aux aux V

The music has been being written

The formula for a 4-member continuous string is *aux + aux + aux + V*.

Aux + aux + aux is the additive occurrence of basic *be + be* (a1) and basic *have + be* (a2) with the deletion of redundancy in preceding *be* in *be + be* and *be* in *have + be* forming *have + be + be*.

be + be (a1)
have + be (a2)
have + be + be

Do does not participate in *aux + aux + aux + V*.

(To be continued)

3. See Yao Shen, "Vocabulary Participation and Grammatical Formula Shift," TESL Reporter, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1969), 6-7 and 10-11.

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Undergraduates Help Teach ELI Classes

Students in the BATESL program at The Church College of Hawaii are getting practical experience in the ESL field by assisting in the ELI Classes at the school.

An unprecedented enrollment in the fall created a problem for the new individualized student program in the English Language Institute. Most of the classes were too large for maximum teaching effectiveness, so they were divided, and selected students were asked to assist in the teaching.

Texts and course outlines previously prepared for the regular classes are used and teaching is under the direction of the English Language Institute staff.

Both teachers and students benefit in the smaller class, teaching-learning situation. There are frequent evaluations and reassignments as all ELI classes are now scheduled in 20 one-hour class blocks. ELI students take only the classes needed to prepare them for the regular Freshman English program.

BATESL students are paid for this ELI teaching, and it is not a substitute for the regular student teaching requirement which is supervised by the Education Department.

Form Class Baseball: A TESL GAME

By ALICE C. PACK

Object: 1) Help students learn the four English form classes (noun, verb, object, adverb) and specific words and their alternate forms.

2) Provide additonal practice for students whose native languages do not have these different word forms.

Materials: Sets of cards with one word printed on the front and the additional forms printed on the back.

SAMPLES OF CARD FORMS

Verb persuade	**Noun** persuasion **Adjective** persuasive **Adverb** persuasively
Noun respect	**Verb** respect **Adjective** respectful **Adverb** respectfully
Adjective beautiful	**Noun** beauty **Verb** beautify **Adverb** beautifully

Where there are no English forms for some classes a line should follow the class given.

SAMPLE CARD FORMS

Verb refuse	**Noun** refusal **Adjective** _____ **Adverb** _____
Adjective adventurous	**Noun** adventure adventurer **Verb** _____ **Adverb** adventurously

Different colors could be used for each group on the front of the card, i.e. yellow for nouns, white for verbs, etc. The size of the cards used would depend on the teacher. As the pitcher calls the word, large cards could be displayed for the whole class to see; small cards could be read aloud or printed on the board by the pitcher.

Playing the game: As far as possible regular baseball rules are followed, with two teams of nine players each. If desired, an umpire may be selected to call balls, strikes, and outs. The catcher signals the pitcher the type of throw (verb, noun, adjective, or adverb), then the player who is up is given a word by the pitcher. If the batter gives one correct form it is a base. Two correct forms are two bases, and a home run is made when all three forms for one word are correct. A player who tries a word form and misses has one strike called. If he is not sure of the word and wants to pass, the first baseman gives the correct form. If this is correct, the play is a strike, but if it is missed, it is a ball.

The second baseman calls the second form

Alice C. Pack, assistant professor of TESL and English, is director of the English Language Institute and the BATESL program at The Church College of Hawaii.

for the same player (if he passes again) then the third baseman, the shortstop, and the fielders in that order. Thus a player may strike out, make a base on balls, have a one-or-two-base hit, or make a home run for his team.

Each side is retired after three stikes, and batters take their regular batting order. Nine inning games are usually played with extra innings for tie games; the game may be called because of rain (discretion of the teacher) or darkness (allotted time over.)

If classes are small or if there are twenty or more students in the group, teams could have five players on each team-- catcher, pitcher, and first, second, and third basemen. Larger groups would have more than one game playing at the same time.

If room permits, the diamond should be indicated in the classroom and students go from base to base. When the room is small, a diagram should be placed on the black board and the player's progress indicated.

This game must proceed rapidly so that students don't get bored. If desired a time limit might be imposed and a strike called if an answer isn't given within the time set.

This game could be played without cards by advanced students. In this case the pitcher would select the original word form from his own vocabulary. A non-native English speaking umpire would probably need a reference list of words or help from the teacher.

The following TESL Readers emphasize the English form classes and have exercises and/or specific word form charts.

Danielson, Dorothy and Rebecca Hayden, **Readings in English for Students as a Second Language**, Prentice-Hall, 1961.

Grindell, Robert, Leonard R. Marelli, and Harvey Nadler, **American Readings**. McGraw-Hill, 1964.

Taylor, Grant, **American English Reader**. McGraw-Hill, 1960.

Words might be obtained from the charts and the game might give additional help to classes using the readers.

BRENT PICKERING of Bountiful, Utah received a BA in 1966 and an MA in 1970 from Brigham Young University in Speech and Dramatic Arts. He taught English as a Second Language in Korea under the University of Maryland, 1968-1969, and received a citation from the South Korean Republic for his work there. He is married to the former Dorothy Elaine Witherell of La Habra, California, and has one daughter, Catina Leeann.

TUPOU L. PULU received a BS from the Church College of Hawaii in 1961, then taught math and science at Liahona High School in Tonga and Mapusaga High School in American Samoa from 1961 to 1964. She taught English as a Second Language and was Supervisor of Instruction for Middle Schools on Tongatapu, Tonga from 1965 until 1968. Miss Pulu is completing an MA degree in Linguistics at the University of Hawaii.

Letter to the Editor

The article by Yao Shen in the Spring, 1970, TESL Reporter, inspires me to reply from my position as a lowly classroom teacher of ESL. I'm frustrated! So many of the questions presented are nonsense from my point of view. Methods of good teaching are just that in any field and a teacher can feel success or failure without seeking support from his neighbor. Other questions appeared to me to be response for the sake of response. The answers to most of the questions wouldn't be enlightening even if they were there. There is no need to consider how bad bad pronunciation really is because it can be correctly learned to begin with. I want concrete examples of successful methods in teaching ESL.

I work in the mass of debris inherited from years of confusion. I don't teach ESL, I unteach it! Ninth grade is my teaching level. I receive students who have been exposed to English for nine years. They have a vocabulary on the fifth grade level and a functional grasp of the language equal to any American three year old. Why is this? Possibly because of the extremely poor quality of English speakers. Our teaching power is on the upper level and our need is at the bottom. "We can't afford to spend the money it would cost to hire specialists of ESL on the primary level." This is what I have been told. But since when is economy synonymous with quality or vice versa?And just what is economy in the field of ESL?

Ideally, ESL should start with a knowledgeable teacher on a blank slate. Each year we receive here a small group of students from Tahiti. They have never been exposed to any English. At first they study only English for four periods a day. After four months many of them are ready to be integrated into the regular program. By the end of a year their performance in English outshines the local student. Their pronunciation and mechanics are better and they are better equipped to use English as a tool for further learning.

I would like to have more definite information about ESL in the beginning stages. I am in need of the "what and how". ESL is my field, I'd like to be successful in teaching it. And what I'd like to know is, specifically, how are others teaching ESL?

Sincerely yours,
Mary Louise Pope
Box 60
Nuku'alofa, Tonga

Any teacher who has developed a successful plan for teaching a specific English Skill, and would like to share this with Mrs. Pope and others, is invited to submit a short article for publication in the TESL Reporter.

TESL REPORTER

A quarterly publication of the English Language Institute and the BATESL program of The Church College of Hawaii.

Editor ..... Mrs. Alice Pack, Assistant Professor of English and TESL.

Staff ..... Brent Pickering, instructor of Speech and TESL.
Tupou Pulu, instructor of TESL

Technical Staff ..... Marie Paongo
Anna Kaanga

Articles relevant to teaching English as a second language in Hawaii, the South Pacific and Asia, may be submitted to the editor through Box 150, The Church College of Hawaii, Laie, Hawaii, 96762. Manuscripts should be double-spaced and typed, not exceeding three pages.

TESL REPORTER
Box 150
The Church College of Hawaii
Laie, Hawaii 96762

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